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# Bosium Strip

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One of my all-time favorite cards on the entire planet was **Yawgmoth's Will**. I still remember sitting in the New York City offices of classic **Magic** website [The Dojo](#) working on Yawgmoth's Will decks. One of my best creations I handed to Dojo big-man Rob Hahn to play online at the end of the workday. I remember him cackling with glee as I left, and when I returned for work the next morning he was still there playing the deck, eventually winning the tourney. I gave the deck to some friends on one of **Magic's** classic old teams of the time The Mogg Squad (which included our esteemed content manager Scott Johns), and two players (Jakub Slemr and Gary Wise) took it into the [Top 8 of Worlds that year](#).

At the time, many of us didn't really realize just how great Will was. I knew that the card was fantastic, but didn't really fully appreciate just how broken the card was. Eventually, it would become all too clear to everyone, and now the card is nearly completely out of circulation. Banned in Extended, Type 1.5, and [Five-Color](#) and Restricted in Type 1, there really isn't much place for the old card.



One of **Magic's** strongest cards, ever.

A pretty close approximation of the card exists, though. While still not legal in Extended (the card was printed in *Weatherlight*), it is playable in Type 1, Type 1.5, *Mirage* Block Constructed, and Five. And best yet, it's a fun card to play.



**Bosium Strip** acts like a more limited cross between **Yawgmoth's Will** and **Future Sight**. The basic idea of the card is quite simple. For three mana, until the rest of your turn pretend that the

instants and sorceries on the top of your graveyard are in your hand. When the card was initially printed, there were a ton of decks that were made that attempted to exploit the card. Sure there were inherent limitations to the card, but there was something else going on. Essentially, they all suffered from one huge setback: the rules. Before we changed to useful ideas like “the stack”, you had to *know* you wanted to use the Strip way before you were going to use it. If someone did something, you couldn't respond by activating the Strip and *then* responding. Now, thanks to the stack, you can.

## It ain't Yawgmoth's Will, but don't let that stop it

Of course, **Bösium Strip** is no **Yawgmoth's Will**. First of all, you can only recast the top card. Secondly, it better not be something that stays in play, it can only be an instant or a sorcery. In order to make the most of the card, we really want to have our deck be mostly these kinds of cards. If it's not one of these card types, we better have a pretty good reason for playing it. Land is an obvious non-sorcery/instant we'll need to play. Another limiting factor is that **Bösium Strip** isn't free. It does cost 3 mana to get going...

Thankfully, there are a lot of great cards that you're going to fit into the mold here. Efficiency is going to be the key. Another key is utility. Any really narrow card can just clog up the works. **Wrath of God**, for example, is a great card. If it is on top of your graveyard, though, it can really gum up the works until you spend the 7 mana to recast it and remove it from the game.

Here are the three best general cards to run with:

### *Burn*

As most people know, I love burn. Burn is one of the all-time best forms of creature kill. A **Lightning Bolt** won't just rain death down on all types of critters, it can also be aimed at someone's head. Any burn is great, but no burn matches the awesomeness of a **Bösium Strip** like **Fireblast**. Consider the amount of damage that is possible with just 5 mana, a **Bösium Strip** and a couple of good burn spells. Cast **Lightning Bolt** (damage at 3), activate **Bösium Strip** and recast it (damage at 6). Sacrifice two mountains for a **Fireblast** (which goes *on top* of the mountains in your graveyard, damage at 10), and then *recast* the **Fireblast** (damage at 14). With only four mana and two **Fireblasts**, you can pop off a whopping 16 damage (and still potentially have the mana for a **Lightning Bolt** or **Shock**). **Cave-In** and **Pyrokinesis** are also really great with **Bösium Strip** for the same reason that **Fireblast** is: you don't actually have to spend mana to cast them.

### *Counters*

Is there anything more universal than counterspells? Saying “no” has always been a great hit. Since you're playing a format that allows for older spells, you really do get to run with the great counterspells. The original, **Counterspell** (not to mention **Mana Drain** if you have access to them), is a great spell that can be a hard act to follow. There are other good options, though. Similar to **Fireblast**, the free counters like **Force of Will**, **Misdirection**, **Daze**, and **Thwart** are good options. **Thwart** and **Daze** are a bit dangerous since they get rid of your land (and make the Strip harder to activate), but definitely stay away from **Foil** which will just gum up the Strip. If you have time, Cycling counters like **Complicate** and **Miscalculate** can be great too. It can take a wee amount of mana, but you can get both a card draw and a counterspell out of them at the same time. Narrow counterspells like **Annul** are probably best avoided since you might not actually have a legitimate target to recast it against.



### *Manipulation and Card Drawing*

The great thing about looking at more cards, either by shuffling your library around or by simple drawing cards, is that you always seem to be able to find *more ways to keep* doing it. It's a fact. Card drawing helps you find more card drawing.

The card drawing that you should be most interested in here is the cheap stuff. Certainly, **Opportunity** gives you far more card advantage than an **Opt**, but **Opt** only costs 1 mana. If you cast the same **Opt** twice, you're getting the same advantage that you would get from an Inspiration.. Remember, a **Bösium Strip** doesn't need to be activated for each spell, just for any individual turn.

When your card drawing is successful, it won't be too unusual to have turns in a mid-to-late game that go like this:

Opponent: Cast **Time Walk** (or something else that is mean)  
You: Counter  
Them: Counter back  
You: Activate **Bösium Strip**, cast Counter from grave in response (revealing **Opt**)  
Them: Counter  
You: Cast **Opt** from grave (revealing **Impulse**), Cast **Impulse** from Grave, Cast **Force of Will** from hand  
Them: "I'd counter it, but I don't have a counterspell for *two* **Force of Will**"  
You: "Cool"

With ten mana in play, it's obviously well into the game. At this point, though, you have a **Force of Will** at the ready at any time, and you can expect that any **Impulses**, **Opts**, or whatever you might get that you cast will be doubled. A **Bösium Strip** quickly makes counter-spell wars from an opposing control deck irrelevant.

A special mention has to be made of the card **Intuition**. The card is very abusable in a **Bösium Strip** deck simply because it isn't unreasonable to find that you'll be able to actually cast all of the cards you search for.

## Mana

The big problem here is mana. How do we go about overcoming the three mana issue? It costs us three mana to rev up the engines on the Strip and there are only a couple of ways to really get the mana up and running.

There are two simple ways to make sure you get the mana you need. One of them is just to run a lot of it. Lots of land can guarantee that you'll have an appropriate amount so that the Strip isn't dead weight. Artifact mana isn't the best of choices here, simply because breaking an artifact will once again turn the Strip into dead weight. The other simple way to get mana is something we already mentioned: card drawing. If you start out the early game using the card draw to find mana, once the Strip gets going, you can reuse that card draw to find other, better spells later. Of course, both of these things are boring.

Fetching land is perhaps the most fun way to go about it. **Rampant Growth**, **Nature's Lore**, **Explosive Vegetation**, and even **Harrow** (though dangerous because it puts a land in the graveyard) all help build up your mana. As an added bonus, once you get enough mana, they are all able to be re-used by the **Bösium Strip**. A card like **Land Grant** is nice because it can often be a free way to get two lands out of your deck. Running the current **Mirrodin** Block fetching of **Sylvan Scrying** and **Reap and Sow** to get **Urza's Land** and **Cloudposts** can be a truly potent way to abuse **Bösium Strip**. Sure, those lands are vulnerable to **Wasteland**, but they supply a huge potential for mana to make it easier yet to abuse the **Bösium Strip**.

## Beating the Graveyard as a Bottleneck

Getting the wrong cards in your graveyard is a big hassle for **Bösium Strip**. Great cards like **Bloodstained Mire** just don't combo well with the Strip, and running creatures, enchantments, and artifacts can potentially make it easier for an opponent to shut down your strip. That said, there are plenty of cards that can help you out.

*The Druids: Avenging Druid and Hermit Druid*

Sure, they are creatures, and that can make them a liability. However, both of the cards are good at getting you mana. In addition, their ability has a great side effect: when you put cards in your graveyard with either of the Druids, *you choose the order they are put in your grave*. What this means is simple. An activated Druid can put all of the crappy non-instants and sorceries to the bottom of the grave, and stack the nice spells at the top in whatever order is most convenient. This can be especially useful with the **Hermit Druid** potentially supplying a "Hail Mary" if you don't have the right spell on hand.

*Whetstone*

This card can serve double duty, as a kill condition on your opponent and also putting reasonable cards into your own graveyard for use with the **Bösium Strip**. In a sense, the **Whetstone** can potentially give you the same card advantage as an **Ancestral Recall** if you flip over the right cards. If you combine this card with something like a **Words of Wisdom**, **Inspiration**, or **Trade Secrets** (anything that can force an opponent to draw even a few cards), you can have a kill condition that can get rid of your opponent right away. Just be careful not to deck yourself first...



### Beacon of Unrest

It can be really aggravating when you have your **Bösium Strip** destroyed. Not only do you not have a Strip around any longer, but now it clogs up your grave too! **Beacon of Unrest** solves both problems neatly. If you happen to be running Druids or other permanents, you can get them back too. As a special bonus, all of those cards you might have been countering or burning can come into play on your team. If you're running a **Whetstone**, you also have something that can keep you from getting decked! Cheers all around..

### Crucible of Worlds

Lands in the grave are perhaps the easiest way to hurt a **Bösium Strip** deck. **Wasteland** is a common way for someone to kill another player's land. Crucible allows you to get out of the common problem of lands in the grave.

### Pinpoint Graveyard Removal: *Scrabbling Claws and Gaea's Blessing*

Both of these cards serve the same purpose: getting rid of anything that might be in the way in your own graveyard. Claws, of course, can double as a useful card to annoy your opponent's graveyard effects, but has the drawback of not being able to remove itself from the grave. **Gaea's Blessing** can be a great way to get the wrong cards out of the grave, and the minor bit of card draw from it is an excellent bonus.

## Wrapping Up

**Bösium Strip** is a card ripe for possibilities for exploring. Since I just recently issued a Single Card Strategies Challenge for the card **Furnace of Rath**, instead what I'm going to do is see what the readers want. Next week, I'm going to focus on another card entirely, but if enough people send in their deck ideas for a tournament legal deck (of any appropriate format) using **Bösium Strip**, the following week I'll run a challenge for **Bösium Strip**. If you do want to submit an idea, make sure you include "Bösium Strip" in the title of your mail to me.

The following deck is just one approach to the card, using 1.5 as the format. I'll close with the deck. I hope you enjoy it, and have a great week!

Bösium Strip, BOOM!, a 1.5 deck.		
Main Deck		Sideboard
60 cards		
5 <b>Island</b>	4 <b>Brainstorm</b>	1 <b>Force of Will</b>
6 <b>Mountain</b>	4 <b>Intuition</b>	1 <b>Misdirection</b>
4 <b>Volcanic Island</b>	3 <b>Cunning Wish</b>	1 <b>Tithe</b>
4 <b>Tundra</b>	4 <b>Serum Visions</b>	1 <b>Argivian Find</b>
4 <b>Plateau</b>	4 <b>Lightning Bolt</b>	3 <b>Abeyance</b>
23 land	4 <b>Magma Jet</b>	1 <b>Cave-In</b>
	4 <b>Fireblast</b>	3 <b>Starstorm</b>
	4 <b>Memory Lapse</b>	3 <b>Rack and Ruin</b>
0 creatures	3 <b>Bösium Strip</b>	1 <b>Honor the Fallen</b>
	3 <b>Force of Will</b>	
	37 other spells	15 sideboard cards



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